District-Wide PBIS Team Questions Related to Using the PBIS Framework to Transition Students with Challenging Behaviors from an Alternative School to a Neighborhood School

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Abstract

Students with emotional and behavioral disorders (E/BD) and those with challenging behaviors are often served in alternative education (AE) settings due to behavior that interferes with their learning and the learning of others to a degree that warrants placement outside of the traditional, neighborhood school environment. Placement in AE settings, however, is temporary as it is expected that students will transition out of the AE setting and back to their neighborhood school. Therefore, it is necessary for district schools collaborating on the transition of students between alternative and traditional placements to plan for the successful integration or reintegration of students in the least restrictive environment. This paper details the collaboration of one school district considering the use of the school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS) framework to assist in the integration and/or reintegration of students with behavioral challenges from the district alternative school to traditional middle school and vice versa.

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Students with emotional and behavioral disorders (E/BD) are characterized by behaviors that may negatively impact their social, personal, and educational performances. These inappropriate behaviors may be externalizing (e.g., verbal/physical aggression, noncompliance, disruption) and/or internalizing (e.g., withdrawal, depression, sleeping); all of which may interfere with the student's learning or the learning of others within an environment. These internalizing and externalizing behaviors may provide the student with an inability to interact with others, to respond to expectations in the school environment, and may lead to possible aversive responses within the school environment (Lane, Barton-Arwood, Nelson, & Wehby, 2008). While students

with E/BD make up only 0.94% of the school population (U.S. Department of Education, 2002), they can demand a significant portion of teacher and administrator time as they commonly require increased management by classroom teachers, intervention from behavior specialists, and discipline contact with school administrators. According to the National Longitudinal Transition Study – 2 (NLTS – 2) conducted in 2001-2002, 44% of students expelled from school due to their inappropriate behaviors were students with E/BD (Wagner & Davis, 2006).

Alternative Education Settings

Responding to the unique and challenging behaviors presented by students with E/BD in educational settings often warrants placement of students in more restrictive, small group, or alternative educational (AE) settings which may include alternative schools, psycho-educational schools, day treatment settings, residential facilities, and juvenile justice facilities with many of these settings being involuntary placements. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2002), more than 50% of the 471,306 students with E/BD receive their education in an environment separate from their peers in general education settings. According to the National Center on Education Statistics (NCES, 2001) approximately 612,900 students, which is equivalent to 1.3% of the public school population, are served in AE settings (NCES, 2001) with 33% to 75% of these students having E/BD (NCES, 2001).

The number of students with E/BD in AE settings reflects an increase of 13% in AE placements over the last 10 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). These numbers may be impacted by the fact that there is no common, agreed upon definition of AE settings and school zero tolerance policies (Nelson, Jolivette, Leone, & Mathur, 2010). Therefore, much higher or lower numbers of students may be receiving educational services within these settings. A majority of the educational schools within AE settings are governed by a public school district through direct contact or via contract while others are accredited as standalone schools or districts within specific facilities (e.g., juvenile justice facilities). AE school settings can exist within a traditional school environment (e.g., a portion of a middle or high school building) with shared administrative leadership and school policies with the typical school or can function as a separate entity within a facility (e.g., day treatment, residential, juvenile justice) with a separate set of rules, policies, and administrators/staff (Jolivette & Nelson, 2010; Nelson, Sprague, Jolivette, Smith, & Tobin, 2009).

AE settings are nontraditional environments developed to assist those students who (a) are at-risk for school failure, (b) display chronic or intense inappropriate behaviors across environments (e.g., school, home, community), or (c) are not responding to the requirements of traditional education environments (Aron, 2006; Tobin & Sprague, 2000). Large urban school districts and those districts with minority and low socioeconomic representation are more likely to offer multiple AE options, as are districts in the southeast (NCES, 2001). According to Raywid (1994), AE environments can be classified according to three categories: (1) Type I: voluntary student placement that provides opportunities to focus on specialized content areas (e.g., Spanish immersion magnet school); (2) Type II: typically non-voluntary student placement in a setting to specifically address inappropriate school behavior as a means to reduce occurrences of suspension, expulsion, and/or dropout; and (3) Type III: typically non-voluntary student placement in a setting with a focus on rehabilitation of behavioral, mental, and academic deficits

as a means to reintroduce the student back into less restrictive environments (e.g., residential, day treatment, neighborhood school). Students with E/BD are most commonly served in Type II and III environments which provide high levels of structure, monitoring, and supervision (Raywid, 1994). Historically, AE settings served adolescent students; however, due to increases in disruptive and violent behavior of younger students, AE settings are now serving all ages (Tobin & Sprague, 2000). AE settings of all types and across all age/grade levels are not permanent placements for students, but are temporary whether the length of stay is determined by the student and family, school administrators, or judges. Therefore, at some point, students in AE settings may transition back to their neighborhood school. As such, students with E/BD who are transitioning out of an AE setting into another educational setting should be afforded the same rights and services as their peers.

Transition Process

Successful transition is a process that requires the collaboration of many stakeholders, but transition may not be effective if not begun and continued from the first day in an AE setting. To ensure the successful transition of students with E/BD and other disabilities as well as those without disabilities, many AE settings have instituted an "exit at entry" transition process (Valore, Cantrell, & Cantrell, 2006). This means, the faculty and staff begin the transition process during the intake process at the AE setting. This approach to transition is important in ensuring student success because it includes all stakeholders in the integration and re-integration process. By thinking "exit at entry" all stakeholders have the opportunity to provide the student with the necessary tools to be successful in their new educational setting. Through this holistic approach to transition, key members have the ability to effectively plan using the strengths of the student for the expectations and procedures for the new setting. For transition to be effective, all stakeholders must have the means for consistent communication across settings, so that new policies or procedures can be shared in advance to help ensure the information is passed down to the student. This process can be an asset for the successful transition of students with E/BD between AE settings and other educational settings.

The transition process affords a student and their family the opportunity to work closely with school staff in their current AE placement and the school staff in their future educational placement. This process typically includes three-steps with a purpose of successful integration (first placement in setting) and re-integration (placement for a second or additional setting) of a student from one educational setting to another. Though each school and AE setting implements the transition process differently, typically three steps are included: (1) preparation and planning, (2) school/facility integration, and (3) follow-up (Mellard, 2005; Valore et al., 2006). For preparation and planning, advocates from the home school and AE setting communicate specifics related to the upcoming student's arrival and timeline. During this step, a student folder is created which highlights the student's strengths and interests and a plan for improvement for the future educational setting. Usually, it is during this time that a liaison, which could be the school counselor or a court-appointed advocate, is identified from the new educational setting to communicate directly with the student about the upcoming transition. During the second step, facility integration, the transition planning team is formed to review the student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and an integration (or re-integration) plan is created. Key members of a transition team may include the parent(s)/guardian(s), special educator, guidance

counselor, vocational teacher, alternative program staff, and the student. For students with E/BD the transition process also must include considerations for the behavioral, academic, and other pre- and post-school outcomes for the student (Carter, Trainor, Sun, & Owens, 2009; Owens, & Konkol, 2004). It is during the second step that special considerations are made for each student including individualized crisis plans, if needed. During the third step, follow-up, the student is observed in their new setting per the transition plan goals and objectives with changes to the plan made per the observation data collected, and the guidance counselor or advocate may schedule visits to speak with the student about their progress.

PBIS

The positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) framework has many implications for use to successfully transition students from AE settings to neighborhood schools and vice versa. Specifically, the key PBIS components of *systems, data, and practices* (National Technical Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2010; see Figure 1) may assist in the successful integration (or reintegration) of students with E/BD. These intertwined components provide the overarching support and framework for PBIS and include: (a) *systems*, this level are the aspects of PBIS which support school staff in the implementation of PBIS across the tiers; (b) *data*, this level provides a context in which all discipline and related to data are collected and analyzed as part of the decision-making process related to PBIS implementation and continuous data monitoring; and (c) *practices*, this level includes all the specific interventions, strategies, and methods which school staff implement as part of PBIS to support the needs of the students across the tiers. This paper addresses the presence of PBIS *systems, data, and practices* within a school district considering the use of school-wide PBIS (SWPBIS) for transitioning students between the district alternative school and middle schools.

District Example

As is with most serviced-based research, this paper 'grew' out of discussions and questions SWPBIS leadership team members had related to their SWPBIS efforts within a district near the end of their second year of SWPBIS implementation, review of their current data, and referral data for the district alternative school where students with E/BD and other challenging behaviors were often referred. The purpose of this paper is to use this discussion and questions posed as a district example of how leadership teams may use the PBIS framework of systems, data, and practices to improve the transition services of students from the alternative school back to their neighborhood school as well as between middle schools within the district.

Six middle schools and an alternative school within the same urban, southern school district participated in implementing SWPBIS for two years. Across the three years (baseline and two years of SWPBIS), the school district had an approximate total enrollment of 24,662 students with 11% of those receiving special education services and 70% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch. The ethnic/racial make-up included 73% Black/African American, 23% White, 2% Hispanic, 1% Asian, and 1% Multiracial. The average demographic information for the six middle schools per year included (a) enrollment: baseline (B) 837 (range, 575-1142), year 1 (YR1) 880 (range, 731-1136), year 2 (YR2) 814 (range, 650-1095); (b) free and reduced lunch: B 73.33% (range, 60-92), YR 1 75.17% (range, 56-95), YR 2 78.17% (range, 54-95); and (c)

ethnicity/race: African American 60.33% (range, 48-96), Caucasian 21.66% (range, 3-52), Other 3.67% (range, 0-8), YR 1 Black/African America 82.33% (range, 54-97), White 19.67% (range, 2-51), Other 3% (range, 0-8), YR 2 Black/African American78.33% (range, 47-97), White 18.17% (range, 1-48), Other 3.5% (range, 0-8). Students who displayed chronic and/or intense inappropriate behaviors in one of the district's six middle schools could be referred for services within the district's alternative school which served approximately 2.4% of the district's students each year. Their enrollment for baseline (B) was 258, year 1 (YR1) was 265, and year 2 (YR2) was 237. These enrollment figures were based on the district's consensus FTE count and do not reflect the changing student (e.g., new students and those transitioning back to their neighborhood schools) population or increases in student enrollment (e.g., steady increase) throughout the school year. The free and reduced percentages were B 85%, YR1 91%, and YR2 91%; and ethnicity and race was B 92% Black/African American and 8% White, YR1 89% African American and 11% Caucasian, YR 2 93% African American and 7% Caucasian.

The six middle schools and alternative school received external support throughout the two years of SWPBIS implementation from external consultants and district coaches. These school SWPBIS leadership teams received support across the PBIS systems, data, and practices framework (see Figure 2). At the *systems level*, commitments from district administrators were secured with a district model of all middle schools to have the support of several district coaches identified with release time for ongoing training and time to visit and assist the middle and alternative schools monthly, and release time for school leadership teams (i.e., typically 6-11 members including an administrator in charge of discipline, teachers from each grade level, a special education educator, a non-teaching staff member) to participate in ongoing training activities. On-going activities were incorporated in bi-annual leadership conferences related to *data* and *practices levels* where new PBIS content and assessments were taught, individual school and district-wide PBIS data were reviewed and analyzed, and site visits were conducted that included meeting with leadership teams and conducting School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET; Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, Todd, & Horner, 2001) assessments. At the *data level*, all the leadership teams (a) adopted and were trained on the School-Wide Information System (SWIS; May et al., 2000) to collect office discipline referral (ODR) data; (b) met bi-weekly to review discipline data and make decisions based on what the data indicated; and (c) annually reviewed multiple years worth of data (i.e., baseline, YR1 and YR2) to make decisions, set goals, and devise action plans. At the *practices level*, the leadership teams were initially trained in SWPBIS with planned and purposeful ongoing training activities focused on various strategies to be used at the universal tier.

As part of the ongoing *system level* activities during the leadership conference in year two of SWPBIS implementation, in which all the middle school and alternative school PBIS leadership teams were in attendance and reviewing their SWPBIS data analyses and recommendations (e.g., percent change in ODRs; administrator time saved in ODRs; student time saved; analyses of ODR patterns in months, types of problems, locations, times, referral staff, consequences applied; SET scores; tier percentages, etc.), members of the alternative school PBIS leadership team asked for (a) ideas to better understand how ODR data and SET data of the middle schools may influence the referrals of students to their school, and (b) to better help transition students from the alternative school back to the neighborhood middle schools since all the schools were implementing SWPBIS. A discussion among all attendees ensued with the addition to the

alternative school team's second request to include transitioning of students between middle schools too since teams reported clusters of transient students transferring from school to school across the county. Additionally, team members discussed how the demographic characteristics of their school populations varied (e.g., smaller versus larger schools, SES percentages, ethnicity/race percentages) and presented many challenging issues. In addition, they discussed how their unique demographic characteristics may have influenced referral rates to the alternative school. Thus, the purpose of this inquiry began with the following questions: (a) which condition (baseline, SWPBIS year 1, SWPBIS year 2) yielded the least number of ODRs per student; (b) what is the correlation between the mean number of ODRs per student and the number of alternative school referrals; (c) what is the correlation between SET scores per year and the number of referrals to alternative schools; and (d) what school demographics lead to higher rates of mean ODRs per student and number of referrals to alternative schools? Then, specific ideas regarding district-wide systems, data, and practices related to the transition of students from the alternative school back to their neighborhood school and students from one middle school to another within the district were generated and shared with the leadership teams.

Data Analysis

Correlational research is not based on randomized clinical trials and therefore causal implications cannot be inferred (Thompson, Diamond, McWilliam, Snyder, & Snyder, 2005); however, correlational research describes the strength and direction of linear relationships between two groups with confidence and is utilized when addressing preliminary research questions with sound theoretical bases. Correlational research was combined with descriptive statistics to address the four research questions. Three primary types of data were collected: (a) mean number of ODRs earned per student per year, (b) SET scores per year, and (c) number of students referred to the alternative school per year. The mean number of ODRs per student was recorded by each school during baseline by reviewing archival records and in years one and two of SWPBIS implementation ODRs were recorded using the SWIS database. The SET data for each school were collected by four researchers trained on conducting the SET during baseline prior to SWPBIS and at the end of years one and two with SWPBIS being implemented. The SET score produces two numbers: the first is the score for the behaviors taught feature and the second is the composite score for all seven features of the instrument. The second SET score was used for data analyses as it represented all SET features. The number of students referred to the alternative school was recorded by the district at the end of each school year. Secondary data included race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. The race variable recorded was the total percentage of minority students and socioeconomic status was measured by total percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch services.

Data analysis for the first research question resulted in descriptive statistics presented in Table 1. The mean number of ODRs per student and corresponding standard deviation were calculated for each of the three years. Results indicate higher rates of ODRs per student during baseline without SWPBIS as would be expected. This number was lowest year two after two years of SWPBIS implementation. The mean number of ODRs per student year two of SWPBIS implementation was less than half of the mean number of ODRs during baseline. These results suggest SWPBIS implementation was effective in decreasing problematic student behaviors.

To address the second research question regarding the relationship between the number of ODRs earned per student and the number of alternative school referrals, correlation coefficients were calculated (see Table 2 for correlation coefficients and significance). A significant, positive correlation was found between the mean number of ODRs per student during baseline and the number of alternative school referrals during baseline, ($r(4)$=0.97, p<0.005). This result suggests a strong, positive relationship exists between the number of ODRs earned per student and the number of referrals to the alternative school in that as the number of ODRs increase, the number of referrals to the alternative school correspondingly increase. No significant correlations were found between the number of ODRs per student and the number of alternative school referrals for years one or two of implementation (p<.05).

Correlation coefficients were calculated for the third research question examining the relationship between the schools' SET scores and the number of students referred to the alternative school (see Table 3 for correlation coefficients and significance). A statistically significant negative correlation was found between the schools' SET scores year two and the number of students referred to the alternative school that year,($r(4)$=-0.83, p<.05). This significant negative correlation suggests a higher SET score correlates with lower rates of referrals to the alternative school. Results from correlation calculations for year one did not result in significant correlations (p<.05). Overall, the results suggest that implementation of SWPBIS with high fidelity results in lower numbers of student referrals to alternative schools for students attending the typical middle school.

Correlation coefficients were calculated for the fourth research question examining the relationship between school variables (i.e., race/ethnicity percentages, free and reduced lunch percentages, number of students, number of ODRs, number of alternative education referrals; see Table 4 for means, standard deviations; and Tables 5 and 6 for correlation coefficients, and significance). Results indicated that there were no significant differences when comparing (a) ethnicity-race/number of ODRs/number of students each year; (b) ethnicity-race/alternative referrals each year; (c) free and reduced lunch/number of ODRs/number of students each year; and (d) free and reduced lunch/alternative education referrals each year (p<.05). These results suggest no relation between school variables and referrals to the alternative school.

Implications for Practice

Using the PBIS framework with the *systems, data, and practices levels*, suggestions related to (a) increasing fidelity of SWPBIS implementation and (b) the transition practices between the alternative school and district neighborhood schools or between one neighborhood school within the district to another were made. The ideas and suggestions below may be applicable to other SWPBIS leadership teams depending on their current *systems, data, and practices* as well as ODR and fidelity data.

Increasing Fidelity

First, each leadership team was to plan 'booster' sessions based on predictable patterns of behavior related to data from the current and past year. These 'booster' sessions should be specific to the needs of each school but did include topics such as expected behavior during statewide testing days, expected behavior and reinforcement system upon return from school

holidays, staff meetings with time dedicated to review of operational definitions of behaviors for which students may accrue ODRs (e.g., difference between disrespect and disruption, difference between classroom-managed and office-managed behaviors), and grade level discussions with new goals based on the most current grade level data. Second, leadership teams were to create or review their teacher/staff reinforcement systems for accurate implementation of SWPBIS to address staff motivation for implementing with fidelity. A few of the middle schools did not have a teacher/staff reinforcement system so they could meet with team members from other schools to learn about their teacher/staff reinforcement systems, to hear what had improved teacher/staff behavior and what was not as effective, and to gain ideas of how to ask community partners and businesses for support (e.g., for either teacher/staff reinforcement, student reinforcement, or both). For those who had existing teacher/staff reinforcement systems for accurate implementation, discussions could occur related to the effectiveness of the current system, 'tweaking' of tangible reinforcements with the addition of more privilege and status items, and action plan items with specific goals of implementation linked to school discipline goals added. Third, for the few schools whose SET fidelity score fell below the minimum 80/80 score those teams were asked to (a) prioritize the features with low scores to target, (b) create action plans to address each feature, (c) plan a 'booster' staff buy-in activity, and (d) schedule another SET to be conducted near the end of the school year. In addition, all the schools were encouraged to schedule appointments with their PBIS coaches for additional supports as they addressed fidelity issues or other school-specific SWPBIS issues.

Improving Transition Practices

At the *systems level*, several suggestions were made that involved district and school personnel which could be embedded within their current SWPBIS district efforts. Monthly 'lunch bunches' were encouraged that focused on: (a) creating a SWPBIS sense of community among the participating schools by bringing together a member of each leadership team at a PBIS school, (b) sharing SWPBIS implementation *data* and *practices* along with what is working well and what ideas have not worked, (c) discussing common district issues which may affect SWPBIS implementation and how to possibly address them, and (d) discussing practices that may be helpful in transitioning students to and from the alternative school to other PBIS schools within the district across middle schools. Related to transitioning of students for integration and reintegration to and from the alternative school and other schools within the district, it was suggested that information be shared on current practices used by school administrators which widely varied from school to school, ideas of practices not in place but possibly worth trying, and how to better communicate SWPBIS implementation plans per school. Some of the *system level* ideas suggested for implementation district-wide related to transition included: (a) brief neighborhood school administrator/teacher/staff visits with students at the alternative school on a scheduled basis, (b) students at the alternative school being invited to public after-school and weekend events at their neighborhood school (e.g., sport events, dances), and (c) purposeful PBIS communication across all schools to include public postings on the school websites of their respective SWPBIS *data* and *practices* for accessibility (more details in the 'practices' section).

At the *data level*, many suggestions were made to improve and unify the transition processes within the district. A common issue raised by staff at the alternative school was the delay in receiving student records even after the student was enrolled in the alternative school, and this

delay sometimes extended several weeks. Since the district adopted SWIS as a means to collect behavioral data for SWPBIS, the suggestion was for the referring school to provide the alternative school with a custom student SWIS report with a few supporting documents on the day of enrollment and when a student transitioned back to a neighborhood school, the alternative school would do the same. This way, either school would have current discipline data and tentative plans to continue to implement and monitor student behavior. To address feasibility of this idea as well as what data may be included, the following recommendations were made pending further discussion with the leadership teams and district approval: (a) a custom SWIS report would contain ODR data (e.g., average monthly referrals, types of problem behavior, location of problem behavior, time of day of problem behavior, peers/staff involved, and the consequences for the problem behavior); (b) a brief summary of the data (e.g., predictable patterns) along with intervention/strategies in placed or tried; (c) a copy of any current IEP or behavior plan; (d) a copy of a transition synopsis (e.g., may be from student IEP) for future reentry to the neighborhood school; and (e) a contact person at the referring school who will be assisting in the transition to and from the alternative school (e.g., this person would be kept up-to-date with services provided to the student while at the alternative school and invited to progress meetings with the student and alternative school staff member). Also, a brief summary of the incident(s) leading to the final decision to enroll the student in the alternative school would be included. In addition, the above information could be emailed or faxed to the contact in the alternative school on the day of enrollment. It is critical the alternative school have these data so that appropriate services and tiers of support can be provided to the student upon entry as well as planning for exiting to occur.

At the *practices level*, many specific suggestions were made to assist in the transition process which the individual school leadership teams could create, implement, and share. First, each leadership team could create an electronic SWPBIS notebook for public sharing at the school as well as on the internet on their school website. The purpose of this electronic notebook is to promote access to SWPBIS information and processes for all those in the district who may need it, especially for those in charge of transitioning students to and from the district's schools. The notebook could include the following: (a) the SWPBIS rules and acronym, (b) the behavioral teaching matrix, (c) team member contact information, (d) pictures of SWPBIS bulletin boards, posters, and other prompts, (e) copies of lesson plans per SWPBIS rule, (f) a description of the student reinforcement system, and (g) any other information the team wanted to share. Second, the leadership team could create a one page, two-sided flyer with all the highlights of their SWPBIS for sharing with parents of the students in their school, sharing with all the other middle schools and the alternative school implementing SWPBIS, and posting as a link on their website. This flyer also could serve as a means to educate students and their parents during the transitioning process to a new school. Third, it was suggested that a 'transition lunch bunch' be implemented a couple of times per semester. During that lunch bunch, a member from each school who has a role in the transition process would meet. Possible meeting topics throughout the year may include: an initial meeting for all PBIS schools to share their SWPBIS practices, with follow-up meetings to (a) discuss how the alternative school SWPBIS is similar to and/or different from the other schools for teaching purposes, (b) update the current data regarding the number of students at the alternative school and any referral behavioral patterns of these students to possibly address in the neighborhood school environment (e.g., specific behaviors), (c) schedule visits with students, and (d) discuss ways in which to teach students who are

transitioning the behavioral expectations of their new school. Building from idea'd', the team members could share with one another how they teach their SWPBIS expectations and provide specific examples per environment for each rule. This sharing provides a venue for the alternative school staff to explicitly teach and prepare students for transition by pointing out similarities and differences of the alternative school SWPBIS with their new school. Fourth, it was suggested that as the actual transition time nears students at the alternative school visit their new school for a day with a peer mentor. For the student in the alternative school and the peer mentor this privilege may be built into the SWPBIS reinforcement system.

In this district example, SWPBIS was the focus; however, other districts may be implementing PBIS across the three tiers. In those cases, additional *practice level* suggestions may be recommended as a means to support the transition of students. For example, some students with E/BD transitioning from an alternative school to a neighborhood school may require support above and beyond the universal PBIS tier for a successful transition. The leadership teams should share what secondary- and tertiary-tier interventions their schools provide and add this information to their electronic PBIS notebook.

Practicality of Suggestions for Students with E/BD or Challenging Behaviors
The above *system, data,*, and *practice level* suggestions should be appropriate and feasible for students with E/BD or challenging behaviors as they transition within a district to or from an alternative school or from one school to another. At the *systems level*, students with E/BD already have a team of adults (i.e., an IEP team) advocating for and working with the student and family to improve academic and social outcomes. One of the team members would be an appropriate transition liaison may be who can assume a role at the lunch bunch and/or remain in close contact with the student while he/she is at the alternative education school. At the *data and practice levels*, data are continuously being collected on students with E/BD related to their academic and social progress and monitored by their IEP team. With these data already collected, it is a matter of synthesizing and sharing the data with the new school which could be a responsibility of a member of the IEP team. Also, students with E/BD may be being provided multiple interventions and strategies as part of their IEP or behavior support plan. Sharing of the methods and effects of these current practices should be part of the transition plan for students with E/BD and a responsibility of an IEP team member. In addition, the explicit instruction of SWPBIS policies of the new school prior to enrollment, when possible, could be helpful to students with E/BD who may benefit from clear examples and non-examples as well as time to process and internalize the new expectations.

Conclusion

Considering students with E/BD are served in temporary AE settings at the highest rates, transition is of significant concern. Transition should be addressed at the start of a placement in an AE setting – "exit at entry" planning, and can be embedded within the SWPBIS framework, including *systems, data, and practice* levels. These levels offer numerous implications for practice when addressing the transition of students from neighborhood to alternative schools, transition between schools within a district, and reintegration of students in neighborhood schools within districts who have adopted SWPBIS district-wide.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for ODRs, Referrals, and SET Scores

	Mean	*SD*
ODRs		
Baseline	6.94	8.21
Year 1	3.00	1.64
Year 2	2.95	1.51
Alternative referrals		
Baseline	40.17	14.93
Year 1	35.50	15.60
Year 2	30.33	15.36
SET scores		
Baseline	48.29	15.66
Year 1	94.86	4.22
Year 2	90.57	9.45

Table 2

Correlation Coefficients and Significance for ODRs and Referrals

	Correlation Coefficient	Significance
ODRs Base. X		
Ref Base.	.97	.00**
Ref YR 1	.13	.80
Ref YR 2	-.02	.97
ODRs YR 1 X		
Ref Base.	.85	.03*
Ref YR 1	.19	.72
Ref YR 2	.50	.32
ODRs YR 2 X		
Ref Base.	.66	.15
Ref YR 1	.38	.45
Ref YR 2	.76	.08

*Note. ODRs= average number of office discipline referrals per student, Base.= Baseline, YR= year, Ref= alternative school referrals, *=p<.05, **=p=.00*

Table 3

Correlation Coefficients and Significance for Referrals and SET Scores

	Correlation Coefficient	Significance
SET Base. X		
Ref Base.	.38	.46
Ref YR 1	.17	.75
Ref YR 2	-.51	.30
SET YR 1X		
Ref Base.	.29	.58
Ref YR 1	-.51	.30
Ref YR 2	.30	.57
SET YR 2 X		
Ref Base.	.30	.50
Ref YR 1	-.12	.83
Ref YR 2	-.83	.04

Note. SET= SET score, Base.= Baseline, YR= year, Ref= average number of alternative school referrals

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for SES and Race

	Mean	SD
SES		
Baseline	.75	.15
Year 1	.77	.15
Year 2	.80	.16
Race		
Baseline	.80	.19
Year 1	.82	.19
Year 2	.83	.18

Note. SES= socioeconomic status

Table 5

Correlation Coefficients and Significance for Race

	Correlation Coefficient	Significance
Race Base. X		
ODR Base.	.14	.77
ODR YR 1	.04	.93
ODR YR 2	.00	.99
Ref. Base.	-.27	.61
Ref. YR 1	-.04	.94
Ref. YR 2	.08	.88
Race YR 1 X		
ODR Base.	.05	.91
ODR YR 1	-.03	.95
ODR YR 2	-.07	.88
Ref. Base.	-.24	.65
Ref. YR 1	-.18	.73
Ref. YR 2	.01	.99
Race YR 2 X	.12	.81
ODR Base.	.03	.95
ODR YR 1	-.03	.96
ODR YR 2	-.21	.70
Ref. Base.	-.21	.69
Ref. YR 1	-.01	.99
Ref. YR 2		

Note. Ref.= number of referrals to alternative school, ODRs= average number of office discipline referrals per student, Base.= Baseline, YR= Year

Table 6

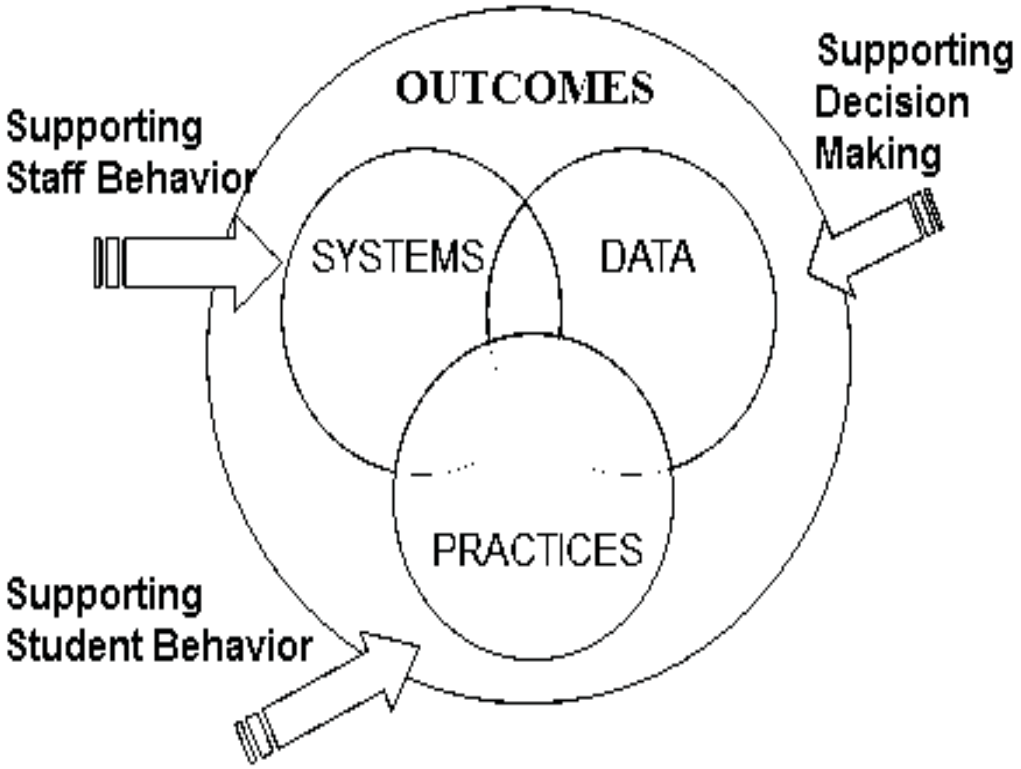
Correlation Coefficients and Significance for SES

	Correlation Coefficient	Significance
SES Base. X		
ODR Base.	.24	.61
ODR YR 1	.22	.64
ODR YR 2	.23	.63
Ref. Base.	.03	.96
Ref. YR 1	-.12	.65
Ref. YR 2	-.83	.60
SES YR 1 X		
ODR Base.	.37	.41
ODR YR 1	.31	.50
ODR YR 2	.20	.67
Ref. Base.	.10	.84
Ref. YR 1	.08	.88
Ref. YR 2	.08	.88
SES YR 2 X	.27	.56
ODR Base.	.23	.62
ODR YR 1	.19	.69
ODR YR 2	.11	.83
Ref. Base.	.06	.91
Ref. YR 1	.07	.90
Ref. YR 2		

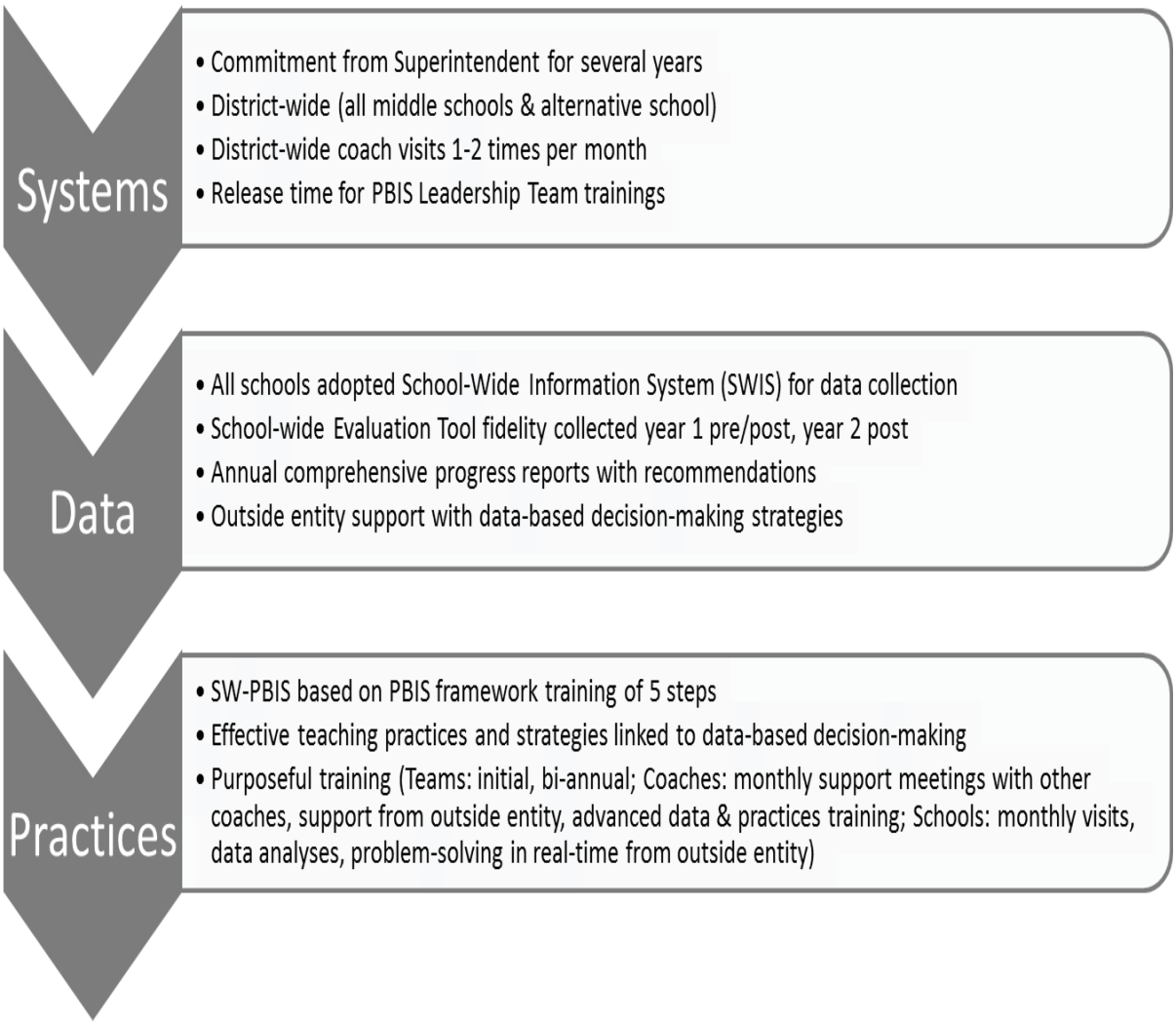
Note. Ref= number of referrals to alternative school, ODR= average number of office discipline referrals per student, Base.= Baseline, YR= Year, SES= Socioeconomic status

Figure 1

PBIS Systems, Data, and Practices Framework



Source: National Technical Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; www.pbis.org

Figure 2

District Middle School Example of Multi-Year Training and Supports Across Systems, Data, and Practices